

MEETING SUMMARY #7
SAN JUAN ISLANDS FERRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING
MULLIS SENIOR CENTER, FRIDAY HARBOR, WA
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2008 – 5:30 – 7:30 P.M.

Note: This meeting summary represents notes from the Ferry Advisory Committee public meeting, and is not a formal transcript or minutes. It is provided as a record for the staff and public in attendance and other interested parties.

Action items and responses

- Direct operations management team to send message to crews about restroom cleanliness
Ferries Division did a “Clean Sweep” effort in the past year and a half that identified vessels that need attention for cleanliness issues, and we are focusing on those. This is an ongoing effort.
- Talk to transit agencies about connections
Skagit Transit will be invited to future FAC meetings.
- Report back to FAC on reduced-cost/free parking to mitigate service impacts during 4th of July weekend
Ferries Division staff will meet to discuss alternatives.
- Investigate whether Office of Financial Management’s numbers include part-time residents
Planning Department will contact OFM.

Introduction

San Juan Islands FAC Chair Ed Sutton, Facilitator Melanie Coon

San Juan Islands FAC Chair Ed Sutton welcomed everyone and acknowledged attendees: Rep Jeff Morris; Commissioners Elmira Forner, Dale Stedman and Dan O’Neal; County Administrator Pete Rose; and John Shannon from the Public Works Department. Facilitator Melanie Coon said that Assistant Secretary David Moseley is addressing the ferry bid and building of boats today, and Deputy Director Traci Brewer-Rogstad is here. Melanie said people can comment in person here or use the written comment form. She provided them David’s e-mail address and phone number (as David had provided them at previous meetings).

New Assistant Secretary, WSDOT Ferries Division

Deputy Director Traci Brewer-Rogstad

Traci said she has been involved in the San Juan Islands outreach over the last 10 years. She said David apologizes for not being here. He has already sailed on almost every route in the system and he met with the town council here a few weeks ago. He is working with the Governor’s office and Secretary Hammond and there will probably be an announcement tomorrow morning regarding the bid for the new ferry. It is critical for us to communicate your comments to him – David will get a full report of this meeting. We are taking notes for him to review.

David’s themes include restoring public trust and confidence in the system. He has 30 years of experience in public service administration, and he is learning about the ferry system and communities. He has been to almost every ferry-served community, and he plans to continue visiting the communities. This is only his 23rd day on the job, but he has clear priorities, including:

- 1) Build six new vessels on time and on budget. We will build three vessels to replace the Steel Electrics, and Todd Shipyard is working on the design for three new 144-car ferries.
- 2) Maintain the boats we have. We have to get through an intense period of maintenance required by the U.S. Coast Guard over the next 10 months with the least disruption to

- customers. The *Hiyu* is serving the inter-island route now, and it is not ideal in terms of capacity, but we have no back-up boats.
- 3) Work on the 2007 ferry financing legislation to look at a long-term sustainable future for the ferry system. This work is in progress and in partnership with the Transportation Commission and the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC). It builds a baseline for our needs to do more with less, and make sure we are building the right size terminals and vessels.
 - 4) Getting to know people in ferry-served communities, FACs, local elected officials, and customers.

Traci said the way David approaches his work is to focus on the basics. At Ferries, this means ensuring that our boats are well-maintained and can provide reliable service.

Traci said David will be here again. We will have another round of public meetings in June.

Public Questions and Comments¹

1. Carol Anderson said there are not a lot of people here tonight. She lives in Friday Harbor and commutes weekly to Seattle. She said the last FAC meeting was packed. She said they had asked the last director of the ferry system for customer service improvements and they didn't see a lot of improvement. She said the level of service has gone downhill, especially the cleanliness of the bathrooms. As residents of the islands, they are concerned that dirty bathrooms are not giving a good first impression of the islands for tourists, and residents also don't like the dirty bathrooms on the ferries. How can we make the ferry system maintain clean bathrooms?
This is a common comment we have heard in the last two weeks. It seems to come up, then go away for a while and come up again. We communicate regularly with the crews, but the service can get lax and we need to refresh it periodically. We will send an active directive to operations management team to send the message to the crews again. We understand that this issue impacts tourism. As for what you can do, feel free to talk to crew members. FAC members talk to the crews regularly. You are customers as well as owners of the ferry system and this is a basic expectation that you should have of the system.
2. Bart Dawson said he lives on San Juan Island and the ridership on the San Juan routes is subsidizing Bremerton. travel We pay 39 to 42 percent more. Is it right? No – it doesn't include the cost of parking lots in Anacortes (\$10 a day, \$40 a weekend) he thinks these fares are too high. Government agencies are providing free park-and-rides for transit agencies. San Juan County has no bridge to it. The ferry system has a monopoly, and sometimes you abuse it. To me the first priority, surpassing efficiency, is to make sure we always have ferries here. There should never be an overload on the last ferry of the day. That is basic service to me. Do you have a commitment to do that? San Juan County must determine its own vision of goals for the ferry system. What kind of service should islanders expect from the ferry system? Is San Juan County proactive? He would like the ferry system to write a situation paper just on the San Juans.
There is a history on why fares are where they are. There is a tariff policy committee, and tariffs are approved by Transportation Commission. We are in a tariff freeze until October 2009. We are taking a new look at pricing strategies in the studies we're doing now. There are reasons why San Juan and Bremerton riders pay what they pay.
3. A member of the tariff policy committee for 8 years said Bremerton is not being subsidized by the San Juans, but by Edmonds. It was a clear decision we made the on committee that has to do with travelsheds. We used Bainbridge as a base and gave Bremerton a bit of a break because we don't want to shift traffic from Bremerton to Bainbridge. Edmonds was the third route going into Kitsap County (travelshed). We are paying our fair share.

¹ Public participants are named if they identified themselves clearly or were already known by WSDOT staff. Those not named did not clearly identify themselves and were not identifiable by WSDOT staff.

4. They give protection to Bremerton because they thought people would drive 35 miles and overload the Winslow terminal. It's the politics of it. The report the ferry system is referring to says that this cannot be fair to everyone. It is purely political. If they want shed protection for a given route, why not for the San Juan Islands?
Your comments are being documented. As for the subsidy issue, we hear that a lot. The San Juan Islands routes do not subsidize anyone. Edmonds, Bainbridge and Mukilteo are the only routes that are not subsidized. Bremerton does not subsidize anyone.
5. A Lopez Island resident said last year he saw some disturbing numbers on the San Juan Islands fare structure that indicated they were the most subsidized in the state. He doesn't know which is right. He wishes they could have information so they could understand.
There is information available, and we can have more detailed conversations after the meeting. There are farebox recovery reports - a 5 to 10 year history. We can also help you find tariff policy information.
6. A Lopez Island resident said San Juan County is unique – gas taxes don't go to support highways. Where's the equity, and how can I use that information? Our tax money goes into a hole and we don't know what happens to it.
San Juan County gets back a large portion of the state gas taxes it pays because there are no state highways except terminals within the county. The 5 cent tax from 2003 and the 9.5 cent taxes from 2005 are not refunded to San Juan County.
7. A member of the Friday Harbor town council announced that State Route 20 and two loops have been designated the newest scenic byways for the State of Washington. She invited everyone to a workshop in which leaders from around the state will tell the community how to manage a scenic byway. They are not just for visitors, but for those who live here. WSF are our colleagues in this, along with 55 regional partners. For more information, please contact the San Juans Chamber of Commerce.
8. Anne Sheridan said she is a Friday Harbor resident and is concerned about the planning process, the period of losing ferries, deferred maintenance, and reduced capacity. How are we looking forward? There needs to be sustainability – public transportation. These are really important elements in your planning and our needs 1. There needs to be more opportunity to walk on ferries and make good connections. There are not enough good links – the options for hooking up with transit are very poor. 2. Parking: it costs more to park in Anacortes than to drive your car on the ferry, which seems to be a disincentive to walk on. You should have free or reduced-cost parking in Anacortes. Can we use Capron funds for these issues?
We have heard about the transit issue continually. David has asked managers to double check with the transit agencies on these issues. It is on our radar, and hopefully we will have something to report back in June. Planning sustainability is necessary – you need a reliable system to get around. Common themes throughout system are that in order to move forward we need 1) new boats, and 2) to maintain the boats we have. Drydocks are scheduled four years out. With this limited availability, we often have to postpone other maintenance, and we have no back up boats. When things happened in the past, you didn't see impacts, but now we don't have extra boats. Getting new boats will help us. 3) We need to have sustainable funding for the system. This is a state transportation issue. We are competing for funds that are unavailable. It's hard to promise more and better service without addressing sustainable funding. Your comments are on the mark – with higher passenger growth than vehicle growth – both systemwide and here in the islands – the need for transit is accelerated. We are getting more assistance from DOT as a whole. Secretary Hammond is committed to getting the ferry system more aligned with the department's objectives. Previously we haven't had backing or ability get messages to the Legislature and DOT. They are more engaged now. You have DOT's attention now – it's not just the ferry system on its own. We are a part of the highway system.
9. Bill Wright said that on Sundays there is a deadhead run from Anacortes to Orcas during the spring and fall schedule. I don't understand why we spend fuel to take an empty boat from Anacortes to Orcas to supply a return boat for passengers and vehicles off Orcas on Sunday afternoon. I know it's a heavy load, but we should find a way to do it without

deadheading a boat. Why is it necessary to run the Ancortes/Sidney run seven days a week? It is primarily for tourists. They can schedule their trips. Why do it every day? If there is high demand on Sunday, why run the Sidney boat on Sunday? I was watching in September three years ago – boats were backed up in heavy fog, the *Elwha* came in from Sidney, offloaded international passengers, and left all 90 people waiting and went to Orcas. I have seen no change in the schedule. I don't understand why people can't design the schedule to accommodate this kind of activity.

Sunday is also busy for people coming back from Sidney (spending the weekend on Vancouver Island), not just for the San Juans. The situation you described was implemented at the request of the FAC several years ago to provide additional capacity off Orcas on Sunday afternoon. It is the only way we can do it with tight windows of crew time and sail time – otherwise we get late and into overtime. It is not ideal not taking Anacortes traffic but we need to get the traffic off Orcas.

10. I cannot accept that argument. You delay for crew exercises. You mess with that schedule daily. In April last year the boat that services Friday Harbor broke on the first run in the morning - what did you do for the people from Friday Harbor? There were three or four cars of people with medical appointments. You left them and made the Sidney run. You didn't even have enough cars to pay for the Sidney run. Why was the decision made without consulting with the terminal, who knew there were people with medical appointments? You were an hour late yesterday because someone had a medical emergency. You have to have people in place that know how to run an operation.
11. Kevin O'Connor said he was there representing students from Friday Harbor High School. He said that their sports teams use the C lot every day when they go off island. It is a Monday through Friday (commuter) lot, and it is empty during the winter. Last week two sports teams came back and their cars had been towed. They talked to ferry workers and the tow company. They were told that they were going to start reinforcing the rules, and that notice had been in the newspapers. He said it was not in the San Juan Islander. They were also told that flyers were placed on windshields, but their sports teams were gone three to four times a week, and no students received flyers. The last time the parking rules were enforced was a calendar year before. You established a precedent of not towing vehicles in March. It came as a shock, and angered the student body and coaches. What prompted this sudden crackdown, when the space is never used?
We have to start preparing for the onslaught of traffic during the spring and summer schedule. The lots are very clearly marked. We need to make sure the lot is cleared on the weekend in case we need it for holding lanes. We are into the spring schedule now, and we are preparing to use the lot.
12. Notifications were made. There has been vandalism at the lot – signs have been torn down, TV's left there. We go up every Saturday morning and put cones up. You moved the cones and parked anyway. The judge told us we had to enforce the rules year round. For 8 to 10 weeks we didn't tow vehicles because there was no room in the impound yard, and we needed to get more signs. It is now well signed.
13. A FAC member said that people don't understand that when ferries are constructed they have to be built in Washington. There was money appropriated for the 144-car ferries but they haven't been designed because one of the shipyards sued the state. We need to get rid of these restrictions – they are unfair to taxpayers. People don't grasp the problem the ferry system faces. Farebox recovery is around 55 percent for the San Juan Islands. 55 percent is operations costs, and capital costs, add roughly another 100 percent. So fares pay 25 percent of the costs of operating the system. Who's going to pay for the other 75 percent? We cavalierly attack fares, but people don't understand the complexity of the problem. During the first two weeks of summer schedule we'll have the *Sealth* here – we'll lose many spaces during that time. The first week is the July 4th weekend. To alleviate the crunch, you should have parking at the Anacortes terminal be free. To help solve the capacity crunch, you should have people walk on the ferry rather than drive on. There should be a trial run on reducing parking fees and encouraging people to walk on. We've asked for this – where does it stand?
We don't have an answer right now. We haven't been able to sit down with David and talk

about it. We are aware of the request. We understand the impacts of the Sealth – it was heavily debated internally. We realize that the San Juans are feeling the hit with the Hiyu. Bremerton felt it traumatically, and the Fauntleroy/Vashon/Southworth route also (one car ferry with passenger ferry backups). Now it is the San Juans' turn to deal with it. It is hard for us right now to consider situations where we would lose revenue (free parking). We need to weigh that. We will discuss it and get back to the FAC. We are looking at adding service to fill in the gaps, especially during the 4th of July weekend.

Operational Issues

North Regional Operations Manager Jayne Davis

Jayne Davis introduced herself as the North Regional Operations Manager. She described the many different responsibilities she has from the Edmonds/Kingston route to Sidney, BC. She said the ferry system understands the pain of the capacity issue. The last thing we want to do is downsize the San Juan Islands routes. You will be getting a larger boat sooner than planned – not in summer, but mid-May. We are talking about ways to mitigate the capacity issues on the 4th of July weekend - how can we add service maybe during midday tie up and/or in the evenings? Normally the *Sealth* serves Friday Harbor and Anacortes in the spring, but from April 6 through 26 you will have a larger vessel than the *Sealth*.

On our Web page (www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/service) you can find a chart that shows the maintenance, drydock and inspection needs for each vessel through September. You can also find a document showing the service impacts resulting from the maintenance and inspection schedule.

In addition, we have a new schedule tool that will especially help tourists. It allows you to input your departure and destination terminals and only see the sailings for that type of trip. We put notes next to the sailings that have capacity challenges to try to steer tourists away from those sailings.

Ed Sutton said he met with ferry system staff two weeks ago and they shared most the current version of the schedule – he was pleased to see that the vessel assignments would be normal after July, and that the *Hiyu* would go away about a month and a half earlier. He said it looks very promising. The summer schedule will be basically the same as the last several years – we dodged a bullet. We should be grateful we are being taken care of by the ferry system.

Overview of Ferry Financing Legislation

Planning Director Ray Deardorf

Ray Deardorf introduced himself as the Planning Director and said he would talk about the ferry financing legislation work. Ray said that our goal is to find sustainable funding, and our path to that is the work we're doing to re-do the long range plan (LRP). He referred to two documents in the packets that were handed out – the presentation and initial forecasting efforts. This is a fast track effort involving a lot of players (Transportation Commission, JTC, WSDOT Ferries Division). We are building upon the 2006 study and direction from the 2007 legislation to deliver the revised LRP in January 2009. The Transportation Commission is conducting customer surveys and the JTC is concentrating on preservation and administrative costs and reviewing the current work. Ray recognized Commissioners Elmira Forner, Dan O'Neal and Dale Stedman.

We are looking at system sizing, the future fleet and terminal improvements. Our timeline is to first look at level of service (LOS) standards and ridership. In June we will be looking at operations and pricing (that's where we would talk about reservations, peak period pricing, off-peak discounts, etc). Over the summer we would draft the LRP and in October, we would come out with a revised plan for review and comment. We would finalize the plan by the end of the year and deliver it to the Legislature in January.

The LRP will outline options for a stable funding source and address balancing and/or adding capacity, managing demand, and operating efficiently. The first building block is LOS standards. It is like a measuring stick – how do you know when you're congested enough to add service? There are standards adopted by the Transportation Commission. It involves the number of vessels missed during a typical afternoon commute in May. There is a one-boat wait standard for most terminals, but there is a two-boat wait standard for Bainbridge and Mukilteo.

The standards for the San Juan Islands are different. We measure in March and August which sailings leave vehicles behind – the standard is that no more than 25 percent of all sailings should leave vehicles behind. We are nowhere near 25 percent in March, but we get close to 25 percent in August.

We are proposing a different approach to how we view LOS. When the LOS standard is triggered, we are proposing to employ different strategies to manage demand, such as reservations, peak pricing, etc. After that we would look at adding capacity. We want your feedback on this concept, then we will evaluate how we approach this. We are also looking at ridership data to see when standards would be triggered.

Public Questions and Comments

1. Dan Zaehring said it isn't how many boats leave someone behind, it's how many hours ahead of time the boat got full. How soon ahead of time do I have to be in line?
Those are exactly the comments we need to hear – is this the right measurement? Maybe it needs to be more closely aligned to the rest of the system (how far ahead of time you have to get in line).
2. Most communities have a comprehensive plan under the Growth Management Act that identifies LOS standards. Did you coordinate with the county?
Yes.
3. Another concurrency standard in plans is parking. There is a severe parking queue problem – vehicles trying to get onto the boat park in the travel lane. We have been failing that standard since the beginning. It needs to get looked at. Island terminals have severe parking issues – not for commuters, for queueing.
We are looking at a reservation system on the Port Townsend/Keystone route, and virtual queueing could have a role to play in that. Later this year we will be working on terminal design standards. How big of a queue is acceptable? How large of a holding area?
4. A Lopez resident said you need to assess situations on the islands not just Anacortes. On the 4th of July there is a four-mile back up - it happens every year, even though it's an aberration.
In June we will look at reservations, peak pricing, off peak discounts, changing the vehicle/passenger fare relationship, etc. and identify the most effective tools in managing demand. We will get public review and comment before incorporating this into the plan.
5. How can I put input into the market survey process? I applied but the criteria was already filled for me and there was no more room. It seemed like a closed loop.
The FAC executive committee elected a couple people to sit on the review team. The commission can talk about the rest.
6. Dan O'Neal said that a professional organization is doing the survey, and you have to ride a ferry to participate. Anybody could go and give an opinion on the Internet – you have to be on a ferry. We are trying to get a lot of information and hope to get opinions. If you haven't been contacted or had the opportunity, let us know. There will be another effort in the summer to do this. We've had questions on the ferry and sessions with randomly selected individuals. Several thousand people have already filled out forms around the system. We do not know what percentage. It has to be statistically valid the professional organization knows how many surveys there are from each travelshed. Efforts continue to do more finite information requests. This will be used by feeding into the work the ferry system is doing. We need to make operations and pricing strategies realistic. We need to know passengers' behaviors, not their intent. There is an active, detailed effort to make the survey statistically valid.

7. Ed Sutton said you could overload every boat every day by one car. Think in terms of percent of overloads relative to capacity. When the commission considers congestion pricing, they should consider the nature of travel in the San Juans rather than the more southern runs like Mukilteo. It is more difficult to shift travel habits for commercial traffic. Financial penalty is a big deal.
8. The San Juan Islands are beautiful. How will people come here if they don't have financial assets? Travel is expensive. On the mainland people can use roads and public transportation, but here it has to be ferries. I don't know where we fit as citizens. We want people to be able to live here (e.g. schoolteachers).
One of the criteria of the operations and pricing strategies are the impacts to communities.

Ray moved on to discussing ridership as the second critical building block toward the revised LRP. Ridership has dropped over the last few years. We are looking at local and regional population and employment forecasts. Findings so far include:

- The overall rate of growth is 1.3% per year, or a 37% increase by 2030.
- Vehicle ridership will grow slower than overall ridership
- Passenger ridership will grow faster than overall ridership
- Routes grow at different rates

We acknowledge that more work is needed on the northern routes with recreational traffic. The San Juans is one of the few routes that didn't lose vehicle traffic since 1999.

Public Questions and Comments

1. How did you arrive at those numbers?
We used population and employment forecasts, which are driving the increase in overall demand systemwide. These come from the counties. The State Office of Financial Management prepares ranges of forecasts for counties – low, medium, and high. San Juan County is using medium to higher than medium, and those are the same forecasts we used. We run models with data from the origin-destination study factored by growth in population and employment.
2. Steve Rodrigues said he owns the Kalakala and has been to all the FAC meetings. He said that in 1951 the private sector was successful in running the ferry system but the state bought it and became a monopoly. The community would love to put \$10 million into bringing the Kalakala back to Friday Harbor. We need passion, ingenuity, and creativity – we need the private sector.
3. A 30-year San Juan resident asked who's working on going to the Legislature to get new boats? That has to be your prime focus.
The Legislature has given the go-ahead to procure up to six new boats, to replace equipment that needs to be retired. The long-range plan effort will have a huge vessel component. They will not be just to increase service – vessels that were built in the 1950s and 60s need to be retired. This is why Traci listed new boats as the #1 goal.
4. Dave Garfield asked why it costs \$12 to go to Sidney and \$42 to come back.
It is a two-way fare when leaving Friday Harbor for Sidney. You are being refunded half a round trip to go back to Anacortes, and coming back we restore that.
5. Dave Garfield said that if you have a vehicle that is a couple of inches overheight, you are charged an outrageous rate. The *Sealth* doesn't have second level parking – everyone could have been overheight. On the schedule you can see which boat you're going to ride. The ticket agent should be able to see the *Sealth* doesn't need an overheight charge. Also, there should be no expiration date on coupons. I lost 3 rides – I paid for 5 rides and only got 2.
The overheight surcharge was put in place in the early 1990s as a financial incentive to use low vehicles. It is still an issue on morning San Juan routes. The tariff policy committee and later the Transportation Commission considered those issues and felt it best, with the variable vessel assignments. As for the frequent user coupons, the

Legislation that guides us considers the needs of frequent users. It was originally worded "daily commuters" for the 90-day coupon book. It only requires you to go off island once every 18 days. These policy issues have been debated. If you spread it out further, it loses its tie to frequent use.

6. This is our highway. No other highway users are required to use their highway every 18 days.
7. You are basing your forecasts on the Office of Financial Management's forecasts for growth in ridership?
No, we are basing our forecasts on population and employment growth. Counties select targets to plan for, and we're in synch with that.
8. You're assuming population growth of this much which will do this much ridership – that will work for every county but San Juan. We looked at 1,000 population growth between 2000 and 2006, with an 11% increase in population of declared residents. But there was a 7 percent decline in total ridership. Your forecasts don't jive with reality. They may be realistic with higher population centers. It is highly questionable for this different place we live in. There will be a 33 percent increase in ridership in the San Juans?
Over the last 7 years there was an unusual and substantial increase in fares. We assume fare increases will be 2.5% annually moving forward. Any changes in that will shift things up or down. We are interested in the number of part time residents – we don't know if the Office of Financial Management includes that.
9. Fifty percent of our property taxes are mailed outside the county. California residents register in Washington so they don't have to pay California income taxes. This defies the assumptions that the Legislature wants to function on. We're not like the rest of your travelshed/business. How do you plan for this place specifically? I understand the requirements the Legislature is giving you, but those requirements don't work for us. You have to deal with us (rural) different than Bremerton.
10. You say that ridership has gone down, but then you said that San Juans ridership has stayed the same or gone up.
Overall ridership includes passengers. Systemwide total ridership has gone down since 1999. There were 27 million riders in 1999. Vehicle traffic on three routes stayed the same or grew, but the Anacortes/San Juan traffic went down about 5%.
11. Can we use vehicle tickets for two cars to get on the same boat?
You will be able to. Our Information Technology department is working on it. We do not have a timeline for this.
12. How soon will your data collection system be working for tracking ridership?
We are caught up through last June. We will be caught up with the rest soon. David and Traci need to review it – it is in process.
13. Rep. Morris talked about Capron funds. Before the state took over the ferry system in the 1950s San Juan County had no state service for highways. 100% of the county's gas taxes came back to the county. Every time Capron funds come up in the Legislature there is a big movement to take that money back. San Juan County used to get 100% of their gas taxes back, and other counties did not. There is a movement to get rid of the inter-island route. The 5 cent and 9 cent gas taxes go back to the state. Capron funds are an anomaly and hard to defend. The Governor vetoed an RFP for a car sharing program that I supported. I want to get ideas from you. We discuss coupon books, buying down fuel cost overruns, the fare system, fuel surcharges, etc. We have weekly phone calls with ferry system staff to get updates about the system. David came up and met with your county council a few weeks ago. There is a new sense of openness about the ferry system – you should take advantage of it. Thanks for coming.

Summation

Deputy Director Traci Brewer-Rogstad

Traci said it was time to wrap up and thanked Rep. Morris for coming. Working with the Transportation Commission and the county council is the only way to move forward. Please let us

know your other comments. You can send written comments in, or use David's e-mail address or phone number.

Approximately 45 attendees. Public sign-in included:

Sharon Kivisto	Mike & Marilyn Akin	Robert Buchholz
Kevin O'Connor	Bill Wright	Catherine Barnhart
Marilyn O'Connor	Alan Roochauarg	Dan Zaehring
Joaquin Hubbard	Chris & Pat Curtin	Mary Vitarilli
Keith Rubin	Liz Illg	L.C. Stephens
Dale Stedman	Debbie Pigman	Doug & Ida Rae McDonald
Blair Scanlan	R. T. Degavre	Keeley Balcomb-Bartok
Bill Watson	Wade Hill	Steve Rodrigues
Bart & Marcia Dawson	Gail Hyland	Elmira Forner
Lovel Pratt	Tim Kent	Dan O'Neal
David Garfield	Anne Sheridan	Jeff Morris
Pete Rose	Stan/Susan Matthews	
Jon Shannon	Carol Anderson	

WSDOT Ferries Division Staff

Traci Brewer-Rogstad, Deputy Director/Chief of Staff
Ray Deardorf, Director of Planning
Jayne Davis, North Regional Operations Manager
Laura Johnson, Communications Consultant
Melanie Coon, Communications Manager

Public participants

San Juan Islands FAC Chair Ed Sutton

Written comments submitted (transcribed)

Written comments received by April 30 will be added to this document.

- Lovel Pratt
 - What is the fare box recovery for SJC with the Sydney run removed?? Please reply to lovel@rockisland.com Lovel Pratt Thank you!
- Anonymous
 - 1. Run a midnight run with preferential pricing for commercial trucks & R.V.'s – high season
 - 2. Change pricing structure to reflect different size vehicles – pickup trucks vs. VW bugs – by length
 - 3. Figure out a way for island residents to get home if they're at the ferry a reasonable time early
 - 4. Keep the frequent user books – residents pay way too much otherwise for their only "highway" connection
 - 5. Do something about bad customer relations at FH terminal – i.e. not notifying the public about towing after months of non enforcement of parking in "C" lot is horrible service – reflects very poorly on the ferry. – Just nasty.
 - I don't have the impression that you understand how different this part of the system is – we need focus on this travelshed as opposed to the whole system. – including on issues related to terminal development and operation.
- Bill Watson (e-mail)
 - Jayne, Ray, Please cc: Traci

Thanks for coming over to Friday Harbor for the public WSF/FAC meeting yesterday. It's always an interesting discussion of random opinions and input. :-)

Some thoughts I had as a result of the meeting.

There were several issues brought up and ideas presented that I rolled into a single context. It appears to me (and I might be wrong) that you could benefit significantly by doing a market segmentation analysis. Based upon my corporate experience background but applied to my view of your challenges, I think it would benefit you to segment your customer base and drill down into a more granular market segment analysis. Suspecting that many of your routes have unique issues (travel time, weather, alternatives or not, service areas) and serve a diverse set of customers (commuters, tourists, residents, commercial, etc), drilling down to these individual segments would provide you a much better chance of meeting the unique needs of the different customer bases. For instance, instead of San Juan riders stating how we are different compared to your other routes, you would have that data. You'd have a San Juan Route Situation Paper that applied to that customer segment. You'd consider the "tourist" element in the San Juan Route (and probably a couple of your other routes) as a distinct element. etc.. Corporate America has realized that the time of providing a vanilla mass market product offering for the masses has passed, as the American Consumer now wants and expects products "customized/configured" for their particular needs. By segmenting your market, you'd have data, plans, and a strategy for each service route that is "customized/configured" for that route and would stop you from being a target of "we are different" input from your various service areas. And presenting your analysis/plans in this segmented form, would communicate a boat load of "good faith" to each community that you were paying particular attention to them.

On the level of Service metrics, I believe you should measure, track and adjust based upon total number of minutes vehicles wait in line. In Anacortes, I believe you know precisely when a vehicle enters the waiting lanes, and you know pretty much how many vehicles get on a particular boat and thus would know the total number of minutes those folks waited for the ferry. Even if the ferry is not overloaded, customers might be having to arrive way early for a boat, not being willing or able to risk missing a particular sailing. This all directly feeds into the level of customer satisfaction of your overall service. And, measuring customer satisfaction would be a very interesting metric, once we all get over the current crisis. Recognizing that all statistics have their caveat, this one would need to recognize that the Anacortes Terminal Staff does recommend folks to not enter once a particular sailing is full (appropriately I believe). This would reduce the statistic I'm suggesting as folks go away for an hour or two or three, returning in time to get in line for the next sailing.

20 year planning. I won't debate the assumptions of your 20 year plan. I don't know of a 20 year forecast made by anybody that I'd take to the bank, as 5 years is a very long time. So fine, plan with the assumptions that make the most sense to you. However, what I think is really really important is to find and publish the decision points and criteria in any plan (I.E. have to replace boat X by year Y due to age), or have to implement a capacity increase when ridership hits level A on route B, etc.. It's not important to me whether OFM forecasts the future correctly, but whether the criteria is well understood for capital investment.

Additionally as WSF looks at their capital investment and operational plans, I'd love to see a significant element in the plan for ways to reduce the need for capital investment. I.E. Clearly in the San Juan Route for instance, there is significant excess capacity for passengers as compared to vehicles. So, what strategies will WSF utilize and/or develop to shift demand from vehicles to passengers. Can we implement a strategy that moves Commercial Vehicles out

of "peak time" trips to "off peak time" trips. Are there methods for increasing the utilization of the existing capital assets? This will reduce the need for bigger boats, larger terminals, more fuel, etc... I think these kinds of strategies will reduce the forecasted "rate of growth" significantly and thus the forecasted level of new/expanded capital investment. This is not intended to infer that we don't need to recover from our "deferred" capital spending of the past (I.E. age of our fleet, etc..). This is more about "increased capacity" needs.

Finally, if there is anything that we can assist with, please don't hesitate to ask. Many of us realize that we need to work in partnership with WSF to not only solve this particular problem, but to build a stronger relationship to deal with the challenges that the future will bring. Please forward this up to Traci as well.

Thanks,
Bill